

CONFIDENTIAL

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9 OCT 1959

Mr. Arnold Beichman



Dear Mr. Beichman:

In the absence of Mr. Dulles, I wish to thank you for your letter of 25 September and for the attached letter from Lawrence A. Spector.

Your article from Rangoon which appeared in the Monitor of 15 September 1959 was a fine piece of reporting. Mr. Spector's letter to you has been copied so that the Government officials concerned may furnish a copy to the man in question, for his consideration and decision at the proper time.

Should he have a Press conference in the United States, it would not be under the auspices of CIA so I can offer you no hope of helping to arrange an interview for you.

It was very good of you to take the interest you have in this man and the Spector letter shows some good may come from your Monitor article.

Again, thanks for your interest.

Sincerely,

SIGNED

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C. P. Cabell
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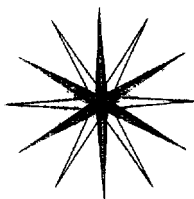
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INTERNATIONAL DIVISION

September 22, 1959

Mr. Arnold Beichman
The Christian Science Monitor
One Norway Street
Boston 15, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Beichman:


I have just finished reading your article "He Quit Communism" in the September 15th issue of The Christian Science Monitor.

It has made a great impression on me, particularly when I read that Mr. Kaznacheev is my own age. When I think of our different backgrounds and yet our similar ideals in many ways, I cannot help wondering whether I would have the courage to take such a step as this gentleman did. All in all, it was a most helpful story to read, and I am grateful to you for having written it.

I might add that it would make me very happy to meet Mr. Kaznacheev, if that were possible. I notice his whereabouts are not known, and possibly this may need to be kept permanently secret. But he may be interested in seeking employment in Los Angeles, assuming he comes to America. My uncle, who is chairman of the board of our firm, has often spoken to me of the many opportunities in our company, and it might be that Mr. Kaznacheev is considering entering business as a new career.

Communication with him might be difficult at the present, but I would be glad to have any suggestions you may care to offer. There is nothing definite in my thoughts about this; only an exploratory desire to see if I can be of any help in promoting the happy ending to this remarkable story.

Very truly yours,


Lawrence Albert Spector

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Tuesday, September 15, 1959

He Quit Communism

By Arnold Beichman
Special Correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

Rangoon, Burma

ON THE MORNING of June 23, a 27-year-old Russian named Alexander Urevitch Kaznacheyev walked into the United States Information Service library here a block away from the American embassy. He looked nervous. Mrs. Zelma Graham, who is the only American employed there, said, "He returned half an hour later. She was sitting out. The third time he found Mrs. Graham and waited a few minutes while she finished a conversation with a Burmese employee."

The Russian was a junior officer at the Soviet Embassy who told Mrs. Graham—it was now about noon—that he wanted to talk to somebody in the American embassy. Mrs. Graham phoned and in a few minutes the embassy's acting chief of the political section arrived. Both men went to a nearby private room and talked for an hour. They had never met before.

Mr. Kaznacheyev spoke in fairly good English and that he wanted to leave the Soviet Union because he was disgusted with communism, and that he wanted the protection of the American embassy. He showed no credentials. However, he said his passport license was in his automobile outside the USIS library. The library itself is in a building which Mr. Kaznacheyev might have had some access to.

What impressed the embassy officer was that Mr. Kaznacheyev's words were not elaborate. He seemed to be a man who had suddenly become a Communist. After the hour's conversation, Mr. Kaznacheyev agreed he would return to the library the following morning, Wednesday, June 24, at 9 o'clock, for further discussions.

Path Trod Warily

In a sensitive "neutralist" area like Burma, there is every apprehension that a story like Mr. Kaznacheyev's could be a frame-up intended to lead to an expose by the State Department of Americans enticing Soviet diplomats to defect or engage in spy work.

There was a particular sensitivity because a month earlier, Col. Michael Strigulov, Soviet military attaché here, had failed to commit suicide and was forced into a Communist Chinese plane. Max 2 under guard of 40 Soviet agents. Mr. Kaznacheyev might or might not be a plant despite his seeming sincerity, and so the American Embassy took a "calculated risk" and sent Mr. Kaznacheyev home.

Mr. Kaznacheyev did return the next morning promptly at 9 and there was further discussion about the possible consequences to his parents, the estranged wife, and their two-year-old son living in Moscow. He said no matter what, he wanted to take the irreversible step of renouncing his Soviet citizenship.

At the conclusion of the second meeting, Mr. Kaznacheyev, who is a Soviet Embassy's information officer and fluent in Burmese, was taken to another place under American Embassy control (the whereabouts of which was not disclosed to the writer) where further questioning took place.

Nonchalant, Mr. Kaznacheyev would have been taken to the embassy immediately following the first interview. However, the coincidence, Soviet Ambassador Alexei Shiborin was due at the American Embassy at noon by much earlier plane. He was leaving his post for reassignment.

Somewhat it was felt by embassy officials that Mr. Kaznacheyev was somewhat feeble to have the Soviet Ambassador paying a social, if protocol, visit during his escape to freedom.

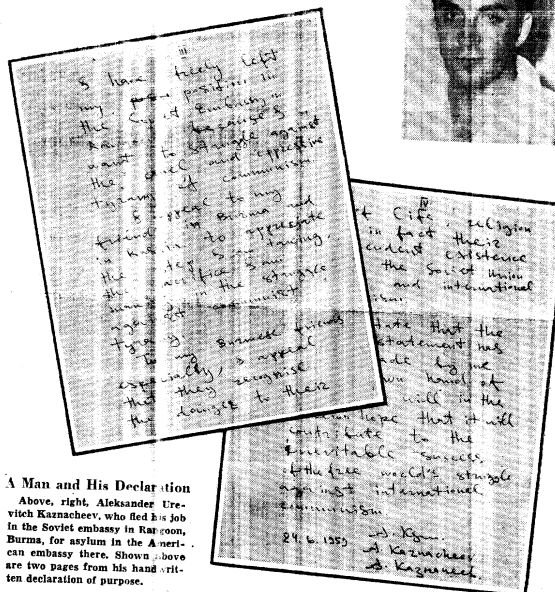
Bedroom Rigged Up

While Mr. McCaughy and Mr. Shiborin were exchanging amiable pleasantries on the second floor of the United States embassy, Mr. Kaznacheyev privately some distance away in "an American-controlled place" on the Burmese equivalent of Crabmeat Newburg, salad, and tea.

As soon as the hush-hush party received telegrams, Mr. Kaznacheyev was brought to the building, a dilapidated three-story structure, and whisked up to the top floor, where a temporary bedroom was rigged up for his use. Food, preferably Chinese or Burmese style, was brought in there he lived until his departure—where he is today, June 28, at 4:47 p.m. from Rangoon Airport on a United States Air Force C-130.

On the night of June 26, the embassy issued a formal announcement of Mr. Kaznacheyev's defection, having earlier notified the Burmese Government of the event. Saturday, June 27, at 11:30 a.m., there was a press conference attended by Burmese newspapermen who tested his knowledge of Burmese, which he passed perfectly and answered in English.

During his five-day stay at the embassy, he wrote out in English his personal statement and autobiography. He released his statements, and from June 27 on read avidly news stories



A Man and His Declaration

Above, right, Alexander Urevitch Kaznacheyev, who fled his job in the Soviet Embassy in Rangoon, Burma, for asylum in the American Embassy there. Shown above are two pages from his handwritten declaration of purpose.

about his defection. He was also shown movies, given a change of clothes because he came to the embassy with only the clothes he wore.

The only occasion during which he was out of the American sight was June 24 from noon until 4:10 p.m., when he was taken by Mr. McCaughy to the National Defense College to be questioned by Burmese Foreign Ministry officials. Mr. McCaughy left for the embassy and after an interval went back to the college and waited for the Burmese Government to satisfy itself that Mr. Kaznacheyev was leaving Soviet employ of his own accord.

Burmese Foreign Minister U Hsan Hoon Aung offered the Soviet Ambassador an opportunity to meet and interrogate Mr. Kaznacheyev but he refused to avail himself of that offer.

This was the only period that Mr. Kaznacheyev was out of American hands. At any time he could have announced he had changed his mind, but it was obvious that his commitment, long planned, was irreversible. From the National Defense College he entered Mr. McCaughy's lounge and was driven out to the airport under Burmese military escort. There he posed for farewell photos, said good-by to embassy officials, all while staring in the direction of the airport building. Part of his looking around might have been to see if any Soviet embassy people were filming the departure from a distance.

He entered the Air Force plane alone, dressed in white shirt and tie. An embassy official started up the steps with him but he turned and walked away. The memory of the 40 Soviet guards who dragged, pushed, and shoved Colonel Strigulov into the Chinese plane was still fresh and nothing was to be allowed to give an impression that Mr. Kaznacheyev was leaving in any fashion except by his own decision—even at the last minute.

Event Leaves Mark

The two starboard engines of the C-130 were turning over even before Mr. Kaznacheyev entered the plane, and as soon as he was in, the hatch closed, the port engines fired, and the plane taxied out to the runway and took off. The plane landed in Manila for a refueling stop and took off again for an unknown destination.

These are the bare chronological details, many of them never recounted in print before, of a political act which has had a tremendous effect on Burmese public opinion. That a Soviet diplomat was willing, after living in Burma for a total of two years, to break with his government is something which is still a major topic of conversation here.

This entire event can be regarded as of major political significance in that it throws some light on internal developments in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Kaznacheyev was born in 1932 and was thus still a child when World War II ended. His family, by Soviet standards, was well to do. His

father, an engineer, was highly educated, as was his mother.

From 1940 to 1951, he was in high school and finished tenth in his graduating class. He entered the Moscow Oriental Institute's Chinese Department. In 1954, he was transferred to the Moscow International Relations Institute and attached to the Foreign Office. There he studied English, Chinese, and some Burmese.

In March, 1957, he was assigned to Burma to become a Burmese specialist. He returned to Moscow in September, 1957, where he was assigned to the foreign service. In Moscow he traveled with a Burmese visiting government delegation headed by former Deputy Prime Minister U Kyaw Nyan.

In December, 1957, he returned to Burma as information officer. Two months later he was promoted and, as they say, he was told to embrace officials that he was to be promoted to attaché and would return June 26 to Moscow for the official appointment.

In a tape recording Mr. Kaznacheyev told about Soviet students whom he describes as representing "the most progressive part of the population." The government and party, by their emphasis on higher education, seek "to convert them into trusted Communists, into trusted followers and trusted servants of the regime, but this policy turns out to be a boomerang."

'Danger' of Education

"Students think good education can penetrate through black propaganda, slander, to real facts, to real life," he said. "They can analyze figures, analyze facts; they can see more than plain people, workers, and peasants. Quite naturally the first and the most strong dissatisfaction of government and regime takes place among students."

"I can give an example, a very showy example of this discontent on the part of students. During the Hungarian revolution there was a little like a shock in the Soviet society. All people and especially students, look with hope that the events that took place in Hungary, with hope that it will lessen grip of terror for them."

"Especially during Hungarian revolution there took place disturbances among students. There were strikes and meetings of students in Moscow University and Government High Technical School, especially last is told to be the stronghold of communism. In such atmosphere my dissatisfaction and my disquieted mind, Soviet regime grew into hatred."

Mr. Kaznacheyev said that during the Hungarian revolution Moscow University students held meetings and adopted resolutions. At the International Institute, where he was studying, "during Hungarian events it was very tense atmosphere."

"The whole social atmosphere," he wrote, "in the Soviet Union is to the utmost extent tense. There is very widespread fear of each other, suspicion of each other, disbelief of aims of each other. This atmosphere, this disbelief and hatred, usual thing that children are afraid to tell the whole truth to their parents. Husband is afraid to tell the whole truth and to share his thoughts, his criticism, with his wife."

First Taste of Freedom

Burma was the first country he had ever seen other than the Soviet Union, the first place where he had access to a free press. Since he was a Burmese specialist, he was permitted enormous freedom in meeting the people, and it was in Burma, he said, that "I found free people, people that aren't afraid of its government, people that has no mutual suspicion, mutual fear and mutual spy."

"Because I can speak Burmese," he said, "it was easier for me to understand this country. I got very many friends, true and sincere friends that help me to feel like a man, that inspired me to believe in goodness, in humanity after what I saw in the Soviet Union. I like Burma. I like its free way of life. I do not lie if I tell that I even like its religion, though I am atheist."

Mr. Kaznacheyev recounts that he was instructed, "like all other members of staff of Soviet Embassy to spy on my Burmese friends, to develop my contacts with Burmese, to report about any conversation, any information I could obtain from them." He was criticized, he says, by his superiors for not supplying enough information since he knew the Burmese language and was given a chance to have Burmese friends.

The meaning of the Kaznacheyev defection was put before the Burmese people in an editorial in the Rangoon Guardian, which said:

"What is most damning to the Soviet cause and prestige is that Kaznacheyev is a man in his 20's, and till recently he has known nothing but the best the Soviet system could offer."

"That he decided to give up all these official favors and turn on his lifetime training at the first contact with various aspects of human freedom in Burma is a blow that Soviet propaganda will not be able to recover from in this part of the world."



Mr. Kaznacheyev, Center. Just Before His Take-Off to Freedom